

Message Text

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SUBJ: SUMMARY OF MEDIA COVERAGE OF LOCKHEED SCANDAL -- FEB 7-9

REF: TOKYO 1794 TOKYO 1885

1. BOTH BROADCAST AND PRESS COVERAGE OF LOCKHEED SCANDAL CONTINUED TO BE HEAVY OVER PAST THREE DAYS SINCE INITIAL REVELATIONS ON FEB 4. WITH NEW INFORMATION FROM U.S. SENATE SUB-COMMITTEE HEARINGS AT A WEEKEND LULL, JAPANESE MEDIA HAVE FOCUSED MAINLY ON BACKGROUND OF CASE AND ON SPECULATIONS CONCERNING DOMESTIC IMPLICATION.

2. ALL FIVE MASS-CIRCULATION DAILIES HAVE RUN EXERPTS OF THE FINDLEY, KOTCHIAN TESTIMONY BEFORE CHURCH SUB-COMMITTEE WHICH TOUCHED ON PAYMENTS TO KODAMA AND KENJI OSANO, A CLOSE CONFIDENT OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER TANAKA.

3. SECOND BIGGEST STORY, MAIN BROADCAST SUBJECT, AND FRONTPAGED IN MOST DAILIES, WITH LENGTHY EXERPTS, WAS OPPOSITION PARTIES' CALLS FOR SUMMONING OF KODAMA, OSANO AND SIX OTHERS FOR SWORN TESTIMONY BEFORE

LOWER HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE. OPPOSITION PARTIES THREATENED DIET BOYCOTT IF NOT SUMMONED: GOVERNMENT INITIALLY OFFERED TO CALL THEM NOT AS WITNESSES UNDER OATH BUT AS NON-OATH "PERSONS FOR REFERENCE", BUT NOW HAS REPORTEDLY AGREED TO CALL THEM FOR SWORN TESTIMONY.

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BROADCAST REPORTS ON FEB. 9 HAVE FOCUSED ON ANNOUNCEMENT

BY FOUR OPPOSITION PARTIES OF "JOINT STRUGGLE" TO FORCE CALLING OF KODAMA, OSANO ET AL. AS WITNESSES, ON QUESTIONING OF AUTONOMY MINISTER FUKUDA CONCERNING COMMENCEMENT OF THOROUGH CURRENCY CONTROL AND TAX EVASION CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION OF RECIPIENTS OF LOCKHEED PAYMENTS AND ON REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON THAT CHURCH SUB-COMMITTEE WILL CONSIDER REALASING NAMES OF FOREIGN OFFICIALS WHO RECEIVED LOCKHEED PAYMENTS.

4. WEEKEND DEPARTURE OF CGP (KOMEITO) AND LDP INVESTIGATION MISSIONS IN SEARCH OF DATA FROM CHURCH SUB-COMMITTEE WERE FRONT-PAGED. FEB 8 STATEMENT AT PRE-DEPARTURE PRESS CONFERENCE BY LDP MISSION'S BUNSEI SATO, SAYING HE WANTED TO VISIT LOCKHEED'S KOTCHIAN IN LOS ANGELES AND SENATOR CHURCH IN WASHINGTON WERE FRONT-PAGED IN MOST FEB. 9 AM DAILIES.

5. OP-ED PAGES OF ALL PAPERS HAVE CARRIED PIECES SPECULATING ON EFFECT OF LOCKHEED REVELATIONS ON CABINET'S VIABILITY, ABILITY OF GOVERNMENT TO PASS LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM THROUGH DIET, PROBABLE POSTPONEMENT OF DIET DISSOLUTION AND ELECTIONS. EDITORIALS HAVE SUPPORTED CALLING OF KODAMA ET AL. AS WITNESSES ASAHI SHIMBUN OF FEB. 7 REQUESTED FULL DIET INVESTIGATION A LA WATERGATE OR CIA. YOMIURI SHIMBUN OF FEB. 8 SAID PEOPLE'S FAITH IN GOVERNMENT WOULD DIMINISH IF WITNESSES NOT CALLED IN.

6. ASAHI SHIMBUN AND YOMIURI SHIMBUN OF FEB. 8 RAN LONG, INSIDE PAGE FEATURES ON LOCKHEED'S CURRENT AIRCRAFT SALES EFFORTS IN JAPAN. BOTH REPORT PROSPECTS FOR P-3 (ORION) PURCHASE BY JDA IN NEAR FUTURE GREATLY DIMINISHED. FEB. 9 AM ASAHI SHIMBUN PAGE TWO PIECE REPORTS SOME MOFA OFFICIALS WORRIED THAT LOCKHEED CASE, BY HIGHLIGHTING A "BLACK MIST" OF COLLUSION BETWEEN JAPAN'S BUSINESS AND POLITICAL CIRCLES, MAY CAUSE A "CRACK" IN US-JAPAN RELATIONS.
HODGSON

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